

ON SECRET SERVICE

True Stories of Experiences in the State, War, Treasury and Postoffice Departments by
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No. 5.—"Wanted a Name."

THE importunities for Cheney to do special work for large firms and private individuals became very insistent, and finally he decided to relinquish his government position and start out for himself. Fully he realized that the smallest emolument of government work was pay. He was not penurious—far from it; yet he knew that a time was coming when he would not be able to work assiduously all the time, and he must needs lay by a penny for the rainy day, inevitable always, whether from old age, sickness or adversity.

Therefore, he resigned his position in the secret service and started the "Cheney Detective Service company," with headquarters in Chicago, and in due time he had branch offices in all the large cities from one end of the country to the other. He even had correspondents in the principal capitals of Europe, and many a case took him and his operatives far beyond the confines of the United States. With Cheney came Ed Loneragan, Sid Guthrie and several others who had worked with and under him during his governmental service. Other brilliant men were attracted to the work and it was not long before Col. Jack Cheney had the very cream of detective work in his hands. At this time he was 35 years old, and in every way nature favored him. Though he had left the service of the United States, he was still called upon to consult or work out many difficult cases for the state, war, navy and postoffice departments. Money came to him plentifully. It was judiciously invested and Cheney achieved independence in a very few years. Success did not swell his head in any degree. He was always the same quiet, forceful, virile, tactful man. Whatever he did, or was done by his operatives, was done well. He insisted on the most exacting rules of conduct from his men, and at the same time always set the proper example. He practised what he preached. He was the general who said: "Come on, boys," rather than "Go in there." There were, of course, some failures, but his measure of success was uniformly great. Cheney often said: "The detective who never failed was found only in story books." Infallibility was not claimed as a virtue. Of course his work of directing the silent but sure workings of his great bureau precluded his giving much personal attention to any particular case. When he did and brought the work to a successful conclusion his fee was always commensurate with his client's financial ability to pay. Many a poor devil had come to Col. Cheney and he had assisted him by his brains, intellect and money, too; and when the reckoning day came his bill had been paid by a fervent "Thank you" or "God bless you" for what he had done. On the other hand, more than one client of means had fairly gasped when Cheney's bill had been rendered. He believed that "Unto him that hath shall be given," and he paraphrased the sentence to read "him that hath shall give."

While he maintained his main headquarters in Chicago, and had beautiful furnished offices, he was equally well known in New York, St. Louis, Frisco and other points. Every one of Cheney's operatives was supposed to be always on the alert, and the colonel had a habit of dropping in on his subordinates at the most unexpected times. The business grew rapidly and Guthrie and Loneragan were given charge of entire districts over which they presided. But the one masterful directing mind was that of Col. John V. Cheney. He was as patriotic as ever, a member of the Loyal Legion, Grand Army of the Republic and a Mason of high degree.

Thus we find him one morning in the '80s, sitting in his private office dictating to his secretary, and this secretary, by the way, was the same Miss Wood who had served him earlier in a similar capacity in St. Louis. Jeff, his faithful colored attendant, came in and presented the colonel with an enervated card reading: "Charles B. Farwell, Duluth, Minnesota."

"Who is he, Jeff?" Col. Cheney had great faith in Jeff as a character reader, and always had him find out what he could about each client before he got into the inner sanctum of the private office.

"Young man, sah," replied Jeff, "about 30, good looking, well dressed, appearance of havin' money, sah."

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"Spect it's woman trouble, kunnel."

"Why 'woman trouble,' Jeff?" smilingly asked Cheney.

"Well, you see, sah, he's mighty uneasy, powerful anxious to see you. Wouldn't see any one else. Then he's got black eyes an' always rolls 'em from side ter side. Ah've noticed men wif black eyes that rolls 'em from side to side is mos' gen'ly in trouble over women. Dat's all kunnel."

Jeff was greatly impressed with his ability as a sleuth. His one absorbing passion was his admiration for Col. Cheney, and if "the kunnel" had told Jeff that Christopher Columbus was an African he would have believed it, and was betide anyone who tried to shake that belief.

"Well, you just have Mr. Farwell wait in the outer office for a few minutes and I'll ring when I want you to bring him in."

"Yes, sah," said the deferential Jeff, retiring.

Col. Cheney finished his mail, dismissed Miss Wood and then, stepping over to one side of the room, pressed an unseen spring, and a small panel noiselessly opened. By a clever arrangement of mirrors the entire outside waiting room could be seen. Cheney called it his "tell-tale," and always used it when a stranger wanted to see him. Jeff's analysis of Mr. Farwell was quite accurate. He was good looking, his eyes were black, and he had the appearance of a man. Like a caged lion Mr. Farwell paced up and down the room, his eyes glancing uneasily from side to side, and every once in awhile he looked at his watch.

"It's 'woman' all right," said Cheney to himself, "and if I don't get him in here pretty quick I'll have a crazy man on my hands." The secret panel was closed on his desk. A moment later the door was opened and Jeff announced: "Mr. Farwell," and the visitor entered.

"Col. Cheney, I believe?"

"Yes, sir," said Cheney, extending his hand. "Won't you sit down?"

"Thank you," said Farwell, vigorously shaking the proffered hand and nervously sinking into a convenient chair.

"Col. Cheney," he continued, "I am in serious trouble, very serious, and I want your help." He paused for a moment and Cheney merely said "yes." He always allowed his client to do the talking, that is until something tangible was shown. Farwell hummed and hawed and seemed at loss for words with which to express himself. Cheney saw he wanted a quieting influence.

"Now, Mr. Farwell, just pull yourself together. You're nervous and overwrought, but if you want my help you must give me all the facts in the case. Come, now, what is it? What help do you want?"

This seemed to have the desired effect and Farwell looked Cheney square in the eyes and said: "Col. Cheney, I want you to find me a name. I have everything else in this world, money, position, friends, the love of a good woman, but I haven't a name."

"You—haven't—a—name?" gasped Cheney, for a minute dumbfounded. "What is this one?" he said, reading "Charles B. Farwell" neatly engraved on the card.

"That's the one I've had so far in life, but it's not mine. That's just it, I don't know what mine is. I don't know that I am entitled to one. I want you to find out for me. Wait, please, until I have finished. I am in business in Duluth, and am comfortably fixed so far as this world's goods go, but my birth is clouded in mystery. As near as I can make out, I am about 29 years old. In my childhood days I was known as 'Basket Charley,' because I was found on a doorstep of a man's house near Exmoor, Ontario, in a basket. His name was Farwell and he gave me the name Charley and brought me up. The 'B' in my name I put in for form's sake. The old man Farwell was poor and had hard work providing for his own family and me, but he was generous to a fault and did the best he could. When I was about 10 years old he died and since then I've shifted for myself. Pinned to my clothing when I was found was this note." Here Farwell stopped and handed Cheney a slip of paper.

It was old and yellow, but the words thereon written in a delicate feminine hand read as follows:

"Mr. Farwell: This baby boy comes of respectable parents who are too poor to bring him up. We are leaving for the west to try and make our fortunes. When we do we shall send for him. Here is two dollars and a half and a similar amount will be sent every week. Be good to him and God's choicest blessings rest on your head." Signed "A heart-broken mother."

Cheney read it carefully, laid it on his desk and said: "Well, go on, please, Mr. Farwell."

Mr. Farwell moistened his lips from a glass of water near by and continued: "After Mr. Farwell found me but one more remittance was received. Some three weeks after came an envelope, postmarked 'Detroit' and directed in the same handwriting. In it was the promised amount, \$2.50. After that there was nothing but silence. Subsequent to Mr. Farwell's death I did various jobs on farms around Exmoor. I lived like a beggar, but getting odd times what schooling I could. The boys and girls of my age knew my history and derisively called me 'Basket Charley.' It became unbearable and I struck out for myself. The only link I had between myself and my birth was that note on your table. Again Farwell paused. Cheney was all attention.

"I first went to Detroit, sold papers, blacked boots, worked in hotels, anything to make a living, and a short time later I landed in Chicago. I worked in a real estate office, then the postoffice and finally became a railway mail service man. I studied during my spare moments and thus acquired a fair education. I saved my money, invested it carefully, and gradually it grew until I had a competence. Then I moved to Duluth, engaged in real estate operations, was more than fortunate, and today I am worth the greater part of three quarters of a million dollars. I am a member of several clubs and societies and am well thought of generally. All this was told with a sincerity and earnestness which forbade any idea of vanity. Col. Cheney waited for the crux of the story. He knew it was yet to come. Farwell again continued: "All these years I have had a desire to know who and what I am; who and where my parents are, and their reasons for deserting me and leaving me to the tender mercies of strangers. But now that desire has become the paramount object of my entire life. I have placed my business affairs in such shape that, if necessary, I can devote all my time and income to the solution of this problem." Still the climax had not come; Farwell was nodding something back. Cheney looked at him keenly and said:

"Mr. Farwell, why is this desire so paramount now; what is the real reason?"

Farwell hesitated, coughed slightly, colored up andidgeted in his chair. "Well—ah, see, colonel, I—er—damn it, colonel, I want to get married!"

This declaration seemed to relieve him greatly. "Some time ago I met Miss Blanche Davis, daughter of a very prominent man of Duluth. I love her; she loves me; we are engaged. But

this frightful mystery of my birth so haunts me I cannot allow her to link herself to me until that is cleared up. The postmaster here in Chicago is a warm friend of mine. I have successfully invested money for him, and I came here to see him. Last night I told him my story, and he urged me to see you, and said if you would personally take the case, he thought the solution could be made. That's the reason of my visit, and you won't refuse it, will you, colonel? There was a world of wistfulness, of pleading, of entreaty in the young man's voice.

"My God!" he went on, "Think what it means to me, and to Blanche. As he repeated the woman's name his voice sank to a tender whisper.

"Does the young lady know, Mr. Farwell?"

"Yes, she knows, and—God bless her—says she will marry me, name or no name. But her father is as proud as Lucifer, and I haven't said him yet, nor do I want to, unless you find I am—nameless. That would be the end, I am afraid. I love Miss Davis, too honestly even to allow the finger of scorn to be pointed at her because some carrying woman found out her husband was nameless."

"I know that's a way the dear women have sometimes," drawled Cheney.

"But will you take the case, colonel? Money is no object at all; I'll give you half my fortune. Yes, I'll give you all of it and begin over again if you will only find me a name. I want a name!"

Cheney studied for a moment, mentally going over his calendar and engagements. Just now things were in pretty good shape. Sid Guthrie could come in and look after the details of the office.

"Very well, Mr. Farwell, I'll take the case. You must not expect results immediately. I have very little to go on, but I hope in the end to present you with a name, as you desire. You will return to Duluth and pursue the even tenor of your way. Attend strictly to your business, and do not be alarmed

if you do not hear from me every day. I'll communicate whenever I find out anything of importance."

Farwell's eyes glistened as Col. Cheney spoke. He sprang to his feet, grasped the colonel's hand and shook it heartily.

"Miss Wood," said Cheney, when



CADET
WALTER
WILDE.



A WEST POINT HERO.

Cadet J. J. Walter Wilde of Hazleton, Pa., will soon return to West Point, which he never expected to enter again.

Cadet Wilde was appointed in 1905 by President Roosevelt. Last fall his leg was broken in a driving accident. After the leg healed it had shrunk several inches. The deformity prevented his re-entering the academy. Adopting a heroic measure Wilde permitted a physician to rebreak his leg, place it in a plaster cast, and hoist it at right angles with his recumbent body by 300 pounds of weights hung on pulley-rope attached to the limb.

At the end of two months Wilde's leg is found to have been stretched to its normal length and now there is in his walk no evidence that he was ever injured.

"Thank you, colonel, thank you. I feel better already. I know you'll succeed."

"Well, I'll try, Mr. Farwell; I'll do my best. We don't always succeed, you know. Good morning."

"Miss Wood," said Cheney, when

that young lady reported in response to his ring, "send a telegram to Guthrie to report to me here tomorrow morning. He's in St. Louis today, and ought to reach Chicago in plenty of time."

That day Cheney arranged all his affairs so he could leave. He made it a rule never to tell any one about his personal work, where he was going, or what he was going to do. Guthrie, of course, would know where mail or telegrams would reach him, but that was all. Col. Cheney also went over every detail of Farwell's story. He never made notes, save mental ones, or carried any writing. The memory of his experience in the "paymaster case" was sufficient to cause him to leave all intelligible writing out of the question. His only clew was to go to Exmoor and try to pick up a trail from there.

Guthrie reported the next morning, and briefly Cheney told him to keep things going and report anything important to him at the Russell house, Detroit. A suit case was all the baggage he carried, and at 11 that night he was in Detroit. The next day he took a train to London, Ont., and from there another train carried him up a branch road to Exmoor. It was a straggling little Canadian village in the midst of a rather rich farming country, and did not look very prepossessing. Cheney quietly set to work, and before night located Mrs. Farwell, wife of the man that had raised "Basket Charley." She was quite old and feeble, but kindly smiled when Cheney mentioned "Basket Charley." "Oh, yes, I remember him," she said, in a querulous voice. "He was a bright little fellow, and we all liked him. We had hard pickin' to get along, but pa," her voice was reminiscently sweet as she pronounced the affectionate name by which her husband was known, "Pa had a big family to support, and did the best he could."

"I've been comfortable since Charley grew up, though, because he takes care of me since he's been able to." Farwell had not mentioned this fact

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